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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/084,232	02/28/2002	Leslie Dort	A889577US	7803

23971 7590 05/04/2005

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EXAMINER

BROWN, MICHAEL A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3764

DATE MAILED: 05/04/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Application No.

.10/084,232

Applicant(s)

DORT, LESLIE

Examiner

Michael Brown

Art Unit

3764

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39, 44 and 45 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 23 and 25-39 and 44-45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 22 and 24 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3, 5-11, 13-18, 23, 26-32, 36 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Forney.

Forney discloses in figures 1-8 a device for retaining a tongue comprising a single flange 40, an aperture (figs 1-2) formed through the flange, and a protrusion (a bulb) 20. The single flange and the protrusion are an integrally molded one-piece body (col. 4, lines 25-29). The walls form a smooth continuous surface (the walls of 20 are smooth continuous surfaces, fig. 1). The flange can be position between the lips and the frontal surface of the user's teeth (col. 5, lines 40-41). The flange is pliable (flexible). The chamber of the protrusion is hollow.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 4, 12, 19-21, 25, 33-35, 37, 39 and 44-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Forney in view of Alvarez.

Forney discloses in figures 1-2 a device for retaining a tongue, substantially as claimed. Forney also teaches the flange 40' being curved and that the device is formed by molding. Forney does not disclose the molded one-piece body being formed of polyethylene, the body being made of the same thickness as the body of the present invention or the device being a kit. Alvarez teaches in figures 1-18D a device for retaining the tongue comprising a body made of polyethylene (col. 5, lines 50-55). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made that the body of the device disclosed by Forney could be fabricated of polyethylene as taught by Alvarez because it is a soft durable material that will fit into the mouth without causing harm to the tissue or tongue. The body disclosed by Forney and Alvarez could be fabricated of the same thickness as the thickness recited in the claims because the thickness of the device doesn't provide an inventive step or any novelty over the prior art. The device could be made into a kit via putting instructions into the kit. It is old and well known to put instructions into a kit. The molding of the device could be injection molding.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 22 and 24 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

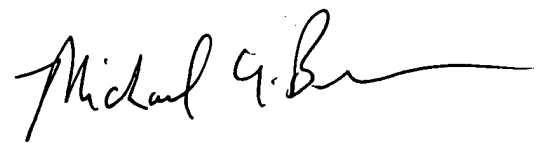
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Brown whose telephone number is 571-272-4972. The examiner can normally be reached on 5:30 am-4:00 pm Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gergory Huson can be reached on 571-272-4887. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

M. Brown
May 2, 2005

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Brown", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**MICHAEL A. BROWN
PRIMARY EXAMINER**